

# LABOUR ORGANISER

**AUGUST 1948**

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## *CONTENTS*

**Struggle for Electoral Reform**

**Keeping Good Records**

**Agent as Stage Manager**

**Plans for Union Development**

**Art of Efficient Filing**

**Storming the Tory Villages**

**Planning a Ward Meeting**

**Soldiers of Lead**

**Socials that Make Money**

**Hull Election Petition**

- **JOHN PINKERTON ON  
COMPILING THIS YEAR'S REGISTER**

## SITUATIONS VACANT

**STAFFORD D.L.P.** Applications are invited for the position of **Secretary-Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the terms of the national agreement. Application forms from **Mr. J. C. Evans, 68, Eastgate Street, Stafford**, to whom they must be returned not later than September 13th.

**EASTBOURNE D.L.P.** — Applications are invited for the post of **Full-time Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with National Agreement. Forms upon which application is to be made can be obtained from **Miss K. M. Dodwell, "Shalom," Victoria Drive, Eastbourne, Sussex**, to whom they must be returned not later than August 31st, 1948.

**ENFIELD L.P.**—Applications are invited for the post of **Full-time Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the National Agreement. Forms upon which application is to be made can be obtained from **Ian Arnison, 66 Silver Street, Enfield, Middx.**, to whom they must be returned not later than August 25th, 1948.

**ST. MARYLEBONE D.L.P.** — Applications are invited for the position of **Secretary-Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the terms of the National Agreement. Application forms from **Councillor N. Whine, 12 Abbey Gardens, London, N.W.8**, to whom they must be returned not later than September 4th, 1948.

**YEOVIL D.L.P.** — Applications are invited for the post of **Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the National Agreement. Forms of application from **Councillor J. W. Holmes, 38 Sunningdale Road, Yeovil, Somerset**, to whom they must be returned by August 30th.

**KEIGHLEY D.L.P.**—Applications are invited for the post of **Secretary-Agent**. Salary and conditions in accordance with the terms of the National Agreement. Possibly self-contained house for successful applicant. Forms of application from **Mr. Walter Brown, Cosy Buildings, 50 Low Street, Keighley, Yorks.**, to whom they must be returned by August 21st.

**NORTH EDINBURGH D.L.P.**—Applications are invited for the post of **Full-time Agent**. The appointment to be made in accordance with the terms of the National Agreement. Application forms can be obtained from the Secretary, **Mr. J. Farquharson, 39 Albany Street, Edinburgh**, to whom they must be returned not later than August 31st, 1948.

**NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE CITY L.P.** require two **Full-time Organisers**. The appointments will be made in accordance with the terms of the National Agreement. Application forms and details of the Group Agency scheme may be had on request. Apply to **J. Clarke, Newcastle City Labour Party, 6, Market Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1.**, and return not later than Saturday, September 4th, 1948.

## THE "SAVETIME" CANVASS BOOK

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# The Labour Organiser

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## Once a Chartist Dream . . .

THE passing into law of the Representation of the People Bill is the culmination of a struggle for a truly democratic system of representation which has lasted more than 100 years. By establishing the principle of one vote for every citizen over the age of 21, by giving each vote as nearly as possible the same value, and by imposing a fair and reasonable maximum of election expenses as well as strictly limiting the number of cars that may be used to convey electors to the poll, we have achieved the fairest electoral system in the world.

In the early decades of the last century the House of Commons represented a small minority of the population and the Reform Act of 1832, great historical landmark though it was, only increased the electorate from less than half a million to just under one million in a total population of 24 millions. Further extensions of the franchise were made by the Acts of 1867 and 1884, but it was not until 1915 that universal male suffrage was introduced and only twenty years ago that universal suffrage was achieved by the granting of the Parliamentary vote to women on equal terms with men.

Side by side with this struggle to extend the franchise went the fight for equal electoral divisions. Despite the growth of great industrial towns and the doubling and trebling of their populations, their representation in 1830 was the same as in 1760.

*Even as late as 1875, 30,000 electors in small constituencies returned 44 members, while 541,000 electors in large boroughs returned only 25.*

Although the Redistribution in 1918 went far to correct such glaring inequalities by laying down an electoral quota of 70,000, with a lower margin of 50,000, the great shifts of population since then have made a new redistribution essential. The present Bill not only provides for equal divisions, so far as these can be achieved in view of local government and other geographical factors, but makes it possible to deal with new inequalities as and when they arise.

The Ballot Act of 1872, introducing the secret ballot, and the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Act of 1883, did much to abolish the corruption which had previously been such a glaring feature of political contests, so that to-day charges of corruption and illegal practices are most rare.

Indeed, the great dream of the Chartist Movement of the last century has now become a reality. But let us remember, with the Chartists, that political reform is not an end in itself but only the machinery by which our ideals of social justice can be achieved.

*Unless our Party is keen and efficient enough to take advantage of this most democratic electoral system, a hundred years of struggle will be of small avail.*

# Are They on the Register?

By JOHN PINKERTON

**A**LTHOUGH the method of registration of electors is altered by the new Representation of the People Act the alterations do not come into effect until the preparation for the Autumn Register of 1949.

Much reference has been made to these alterations, and the fact that the securing of names for registration will be done by household canvass, but members should not be alarmed that such a canvass has not taken place in their area.

Registration for this year's register will be done in the same manner as it has been done over the last three years, namely by the information being given to the local Registration Officer by the Food Office, so that all persons over 21 years of age, British subjects without any legal incapacity, should be on the preliminary electors lists for the address at which they resided on the 30th June, the qualifying date.

It does happen, however, that people fail to notify the Food Office of their change of address, and for that reason or another they are left off the list. This list first appears on the 9th August, and is to be found in the Post Office in the polling district concerned or in the Town Hall, and each Constituency Party Agent or Secretary can claim two free copies, which can be divided up and sent to each Local Labour Party, Ward or Polling District.

*There is plenty of opportunity, therefore, for every person to see that his or her name is on the list.*

## Claims and Objections

As this is not the final register, electors can claim to be put on, but this must be done within fourteen days of the list being published.

There is no special form required to claim registration. Just a simple application to the Registration Officer setting out clearly the qualifications which are considered to exist, the address at which the applicant resided on the 30th June, his name and present address, and his National Identity Number is all that is required.

If the application is in order the

Registration Officer will accept it, and the name will be placed on the list. If it is not in order he will inform the claimant that the claim will be disallowed unless further representations to substantiate the claim are received within three days, or alternatively he will send a notice informing the claimant that this claim will be heard at a time and place for the hearing of such claims.

## Right to Object

Likewise, if a person believes that another person's name should not be on the list, he can object to the Registration Officer, specifying clearly the grounds for his objection. The person about whom the objection is made will be informed of the objection and an opportunity given to him to rebut this at the hearing of claims. Anybody appearing to be interested may be heard. This means that an agent or local secretary may make representations at the hearing for the person concerned. A list of claims and objections will not be published in the same manner as the electors' lists, but they will be available for inspection at all reasonable times at the Office of the Registration Officer.

The consideration of all claims and objections will be completed on or before the twenty-fourth day after the publication of the electors' lists, and the final register will be published on the 15th October.

The Register will then be in force until the 14th October, 1949.

All Parties should make a special effort to see that all the "left off" persons get on the register and a member should be appointed in every street or road to record any missing names in that street or road. Simple forms of claim as mentioned above can be duplicated and the persons asked to sign them.

*This task is well worth doing and will ensure a register as complete as it is possible to get.*

A final word about absent voters. The new Act provides for absent voters to vote by post in Local Government Elections, but this will not come into force until the autumn register is published in 1949. There will, therefore,



be no voting by post in the next spring Local Elections.

### Votes by Post

Postal Voting will still apply for Parliamentary Elections, and any persons who by reason of their occupation, service or employment are debarred from voting in person, or persons who by reason of blindness or physical incapacity are thereby not able to go to the polling station can apply to be placed on the absent voters' list, and will receive a postal ballot paper.

Application to be included in the Absent Voters List must be made before the date of a dissolution of Parliament, or in the case of a Parliamentary By-Election before date on which the writ is received.

Notices giving a complete time-table for the compilation of the register will appear in all local newspapers and will be posted outside Council Offices a few days before the 9th August, so there should be no reason why any person qualified is left off other than his own neglect. See to it that he does not neglect this important matter.

### Do Not Delay

Each constituency agent or secretary can obtain eight (or six, if two are single-sided) copies of the register, free of charge, irrespective of the imminence of an election, and steps should be taken by all such agents and secretaries to obtain these from the Registration Officer as soon as they are published, and not leave it until the eve of the local elections.

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## New Appointments

Mr. S. F. Dunce, who becomes agent at High Wycombe, is an electrician by profession. Aged 31, he has been an active Party member for 15 years. He has held a number of offices in Bexleyheath D.L.P. and acted as liaison and meetings officer during the 1946 by-election in this constituency. He has also had considerable organising experience as a District Council Secretary of the British Federation of Co-operative Youth.

Mr. William Boardman, who since November, 1947, has acted as full-time Divisional Secretary for West Derbyshire, now becomes full-time Secretary and Agent. Aged 51, he has been secretary of his local Party for four years and was a sub-agent during the 1945 General Election. Mr. Boardman was a candidate at the 1946 County Council elections.

Mr. W. D. Stansfield, who was Agent at Chorley for five years, from 1935, has now been appointed agent for Dartford. Aged 49, his profession has been that of jig and tool inspector and he has been an active member of the A.E.U. since the age of 16, serving as branch chairman for seven years. He has also been chairman of the North Lincs. Area Council for the National Council of Labour Colleges and was for three years a member of Leyland U.D.C. Mr. Stansfield has had wide experience in Parliamentary and local government elections.

Mrs. A. E. Spivey, who has been full-time Agent at Accrington since 1945, now becomes Agent for Hampstead. A Party member for 26 years, Mrs. Spivey has held various agencies since 1931, when she was in control of Parliamentary elections at Llandaff and Barry. She has also acted as Agent in all types of local government elections.

Mr. Harry Rogers, who has been active in the Labour Movement for many years, now becomes Agent for N.W. Camberwell. An electric welder by profession, he has had considerable experience of Parliamentary elections, acting as Assistant Agent in Eccles in 1929 and at Wallasey in 1945. Aged 43, he has been a Party member for 24 years.

### FULL-TIME COLLECTOR

*With the appointment of Councillor Robert Steele as first full-time collector for a Divisional Labour Party in Scotland, West Lothian makes history. An increase in membership to 3,400 compared with under 700 in 1945 has made such an appointment necessary. Now the aim is to top the 4,000 mark by the end of the year.*

"Keep it simple—that is the essence of good record-keeping"

## On the Records

By ROBERT E. WYATT, Secretary and Agent, Greenwich L.P.

From time to time when one meets active Party Officers the conversation gets around to the compiling of records, whether they be Membership, Contributions, or Canvass Returns. All agree, whether the Party is large or small, that it is most essential to keep some records and so the question of what system is used becomes all-important.

We have all types of people in the Party taking an active part, and while some have good memories, others feel they have not the time to devote to complicated systems. It is when changes of personnel come along that the system will be appreciated and the Party will benefit.

The essence of good records is to keep them as simple as possible, but at the same time have them handy and available at all times. Whether it be membership, contributions or helpers, the simple maxim must be "to write it down." Those scraps of paper or odd notebooks will not do; they can never be found when required.

The method I wish to recommend will, I am sure, commend itself to the Party or Ward Secretary, and he is the man we must always be ready to help with his limited time and space available. For membership records, I find in addition to the single index card system, which is suitable for office use, the Cavedex Junior index card system the best.

Here we have a neat attractive folder in green cloth which measures  $6\frac{1}{4}$  x 14 inches, which will hold 25 double-sided cards each side of the folder, making 50 cards in all, sufficient for 1,000 names and addresses. They are arranged to fit in the folder, each card being held with an elastic band. Cards can be allocated for each road and additional cards be inserted under the rubber band according to the need. You will see then you only require the number of road, the name of members, with room for special activities for reference. These folders are cheap at 14/6 each, and additional

(Continued on page 19)

← ----- 6" ----- →

↑		
↑	10.	MR. H. SMITH. STREET STEWARD
↑	10.	MRS E. SMITH.
↑	14.	MR. H. JONES.
↑	16	MR. R. BROWN. CAR.
↑	20	MR. H. WHITE. E
4"	20	MRS E. WHITE. SECTION.
↑	22.	MRS T. DAY. SECTION.
↑	22.	MISS R. DAY. YOUTH SECT
↑	26	MR. THOMPSON.
↑	28	MR. R. WRIGHT. E
↑	28	MRS M. WRIGHT. E
↑	28	MR. J. WRIGHT. E
↓	WOOLNICH ROAD.	



# The Agent as Stage Manager

By HAROLD CROFT

I AM still concerned with the suggestion that a new agent can in an immediate sort of way start to improve things by a little tactful stage-managing in respect to the General Committee. In the last article I tried to show how Standing Orders for the transaction of business could be invoked to help in remedying faults and I hinted that they could be used to circumvent wayward officials and to reform procedures.

For instance, a way of dealing with a garrulous chairman, who himself makes a rambling contribution after every speech from delegates, would be to prompt a discreet delegate to call attention to the Standing Orders and to move dispassionately and perhaps slightly humorously that the chairman leave the chair to make his speech. This would have a salutary effect in drawing attention to a reasonable Standing Order which the Chairman is breaking, and in showing the delegates that they need not be at the mercy of a talkative chairman.

*The slightest touch of firmness would soon hold the chairman in check, and without any offence or upset, weariness would be eclipsed and business speeded up.*

## Presentation of Reports

Very often the reports of ward or local party delegates are given in a very casual way, and time is consumed wastefully. We all know the opening—"Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't know that I have much to report . . ." The delegate meanders on, trying to collect his thoughts. Soon there is a sense the report does not matter, and no one cares.

This is bad all round and the new agent should do a little stage-managing. Adroitly in the period before a next meeting he could button-hole one or two of the more amenable of the ward or local party delegates and prompt them with some desirable points about their wards. Add a word of commendation, and suggest they make a note or two, to be sure of not overlooking the facts that will interest the committee—such stage-managing has resulted in pithy and stimulating reports becoming a bright feature of General Committee proceedings.

There is also the reciprocal effect on the wards or local parties which are moved to consistent efforts to justify the commendations that arise from good reports of their activities.

Again, if the presentation of the financial report is lackadaisical or fragmentary the new agent can do something about it. He may interpose comments which give it a businesslike touch, and cause the treasurer to think that both himself and the finances are more important than hitherto he had allowed himself to think. Such indeed auto-suggestion may have beneficial results in raising his competence.

## Time and Trouble Repaid

The new agent should rehearse his presentation of correspondence. Time spent on this will more than repay him for his trouble. The letters and documents should first be sorted in groups according to importance or interest and plainly docketed. Summaries of lengthy epistles or memoranda should be attached. Alternatively in many cases the underlining of significant sentences will provide a ready key to, or digest of, the contents. Then review the correspondence in the order to be taken at the meeting.

This quick rehearsal will give the agent a firm appraisal of the varied contents and enable him to present the correspondence with arresting incisiveness and celerity. All this will make a difference to the spirit and tempo of a meeting from the beginning.

*A new agent can resolve to make every General Committee meeting a really important event. If in a natural way he or she will take some prior trouble to "rehearse" for it and to "stage" it to produce effective results out of its own evoked competence, then it will follow that the tone and zest of the committee will be raised and there will be beneficial repercussions throughout the party.*

The suggestions I have made in these articles merely indicate the sort of approaches that a new agent could make as a first endeavour. Naturally he or she would, as a start, choose discreet lines of approach appropriate to achieving some incidental improvements.

(To be continued)

# Plans for Union Development

By L. H. M. HILLIARD, General Secretary, Agents' Union

Last year was a fairly hectic one so far as the Union Executive were concerned. Most of our time was taken up with discussions and negotiation on the Agents' Charter and we were ably led by our Chairman "Joe" Davies, of Swansea.

But changes take place in all organisations, periods of office come to an end, and at their last meeting the Executives appointed "Euan" Carr, of Halifax, Chairman, and "Dai" Cousins, of Ealing, Vice-Chairman for the ensuing year. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman and the General Secretary were appointed Union representatives on the Adjustments Board and "Joe" Davies as substitute delegate on this body in view of his close and particular knowledge of recent negotiations.

So this year, Yorkshire and London share equally the responsibilities of office and we can rest assured that, as in the past, we shall be well served.

## Shades of Conference

A good deal of thought has been given to the General Secretary's memorandum, accepted by the Union Annual Conference, on the "Training and Recruitment of Agents." The question of differential scales for Borough, County and Area organisers has been of major concern as well as the question of employing bodies. Then too, on the assumption that most of the scheme will eventually come into operation as a long-term programme, some thought will have to be given to remuneration of Organising Assistants undergoing training.

It is clear that some regular channel for recruitment of future agency staff and a proper basis of training, both theoretical and practical, would pay big dividends in the long run in terms of increased efficiency. In order to provide full-time organisational assistance on a really national basis it is clear that there will tend to be a shifting of emphasis from the purely constituency level to Borough and Area levels in many places. In this connection it will be interesting to watch the progress that is being made by Harold Nash at Birmingham, who will soon be responsible for a team of agents, employed at Borough level and responsible for development over Birmingham as a whole.

The success of the Union's venture this year in providing accommodation for members, their delegates and M.P.s has encouraged the E.C. to make much bolder plans for next year. This preliminary notice will be followed by more detailed information in a newsletter to be issued shortly of our intention to book increased hotel accommodation and to make plans and arrangements now for a Union "get-together" on a fairly ambitious scale. Will members bear this in mind and plan to use the facilities provided by the Union?

Next year's conference will be important to us all as attention will naturally tend to focus on the Parliamentary elections of 1950. We hope to see a representative body of agents present and shall plan for special sessions of our own conference in order that we may have discussions with the National Agent on the election arrangements. If possible, too, we shall endeavour to arrange with Head Office for the union to be responsible for the issue of diaries and facility tickets as this position has been most obscure in the past.

## Union Reorganisation

The increasing membership of the Union, which is likely to continue and will, we hope, be of a permanent nature, is producing problems which, together with the understandable desire of Scottish agents and others to have their own district organisations, have to be solved. The work now devolving on the Union, in addition to the development that is taking place internally, is placing a severe strain upon our financial resources. Steps have been taken to provide some organisation for our colleagues in Scotland and, if they can come to terms with London District, for our colleagues in the Eastern Counties who wish to form a group to discuss common problems.

Long term, fundamental changes will be necessary in Union organisation and the Executive is now getting down to this problem. Soon, it is hoped to initiate consideration by the districts of concrete proposals.

One thing I think we are agreed upon is that changes ought not to be implemented until we see how far we have been able to consolidate our gains in membership.



## Bring in those Subs

By JOHN W. WAINWRIGHT, Secretary-Agent, Eland D.L.P.

It was two months ago, after a visit to my Division by Mr. J. W. Throup, lately agent for Nelson and Colne, that my Executive Committee agreed to allow me to put into operation the system of Centralisation of Members' Subscriptions. I am now firmly convinced of the efficiency of this system and that the National Executive Committee should encourage its use wherever possible.

Many D.L.P.s have given very little thought in the past to the method of collecting members' subscriptions. There have been many occasions when a D.L.P., or sometimes a L.L.P., has organised a membership campaign without giving any real thought to the problem of keeping new members once they have signed up. A check-up made from many balance sheets by dividing the sums received in membership subscriptions by the number of cards paid for to Head Office, show that the average income per member is often nearer two than six shillings.

*I am certain that by centralisation it is possible to improve on this income per member.*

Centralisation means, first of all, that the agent is responsible for the collection of the whole of the subscriptions in the Division. "A tall order," you may well say. At first that is true, but the job must be tackled stage by stage, ward by ward.

### Find Your Collectors

First, it is necessary to find collectors in the area you are tackling, and approached carefully you will surely find many members who will collect perhaps a dozen or twenty subs each month. Then arrange once a month to be at a fixed place for three hours on a particular night. That is easy enough in a Borough and even in some U.D.C. areas but in country areas it may be necessary to go out to different areas once every two months and meet the collectors. Two-monthly intervals is the maximum period I should allow.

There are obvious advantages to be

derived from this system. You receive a steady flow of subscriptions throughout the year. You relieve the ward secretary and local party secretary from a good deal of work enabling him or her to devote more time to canvassing and political work. You have an up-to-date membership register, not only of every ward but of the whole of the Division and you can spot immediately where any ward organisation is slipping through an inefficient secretary or other reasons.

### Election Help

By making your collectors "membership conscious," there should be a steady flow of new members coming in week by week. Then, too, by this system it should be possible to build up a really strong ward organisation for election times. How easy, for instance, to send out a special election appeal for funds with your collectors on the spot to collect the money.

I agree with the Editor in his final remark in last month's "Organiser" that "election machinery will count much more next time." Time is very short and I do not intend to allow the Tories in my Division to brag about their thousands of members. If anyone is going to brag, it will be myself. The way ahead, Mr. Editor, is to my mind quite clear and we should now be on our journey.

## EAST FULHAM'S MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

*Over 100 members in two evenings has given a flying start to East Fulham's membership campaign. On Friday evenings during the summer months, canvassers go from door to door while short addresses on the Government's work and policy are given by loud-speaker. Mr. Michael Stewart, East Fulham's M.P., Mr. Fred Powe, L.C.C., as well as many active members of the Labour Party are taking part in the campaign.*



## MORTONS FOR STATIONERY

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# Where's that File ?

By LILE E. BALDWIN

Miss Baldwin, who is secretary to John Pinkerton, gives some sound advice on that most difficult problem of efficient filing.

**F**ILING is an essential ingredient of efficient secretaryship. It's not one of those unimportant things to be left for a rainy day but more in the nature of the building-up of an information bureau.

The time and attention thus spent are handsomely repaid in freedom from worry and competent handling, and the smoother operation of official duties. The resulting ease of access to all documents should ensure speedier production of correspondence, etc., whenever needed and after any lapse of time, as well as their preservation from dirt or damage.

Methods of approach vary and no ready-made system is adequate for all needs. A plan for individual requirements needs to be carefully worked out in sufficient detail to provide an exact place on the files for every type of letter and document, and, when once adopted, should be strictly adhered to and regularly kept up-to-date.

A simple alphabetical arrangement of letters under the correspondent's name may prove satisfactory for use within a limited scope. But a more comprehensive system would need devising where a diversity of material has to be dealt with, such as a "subject" arrangement, with a *numerical notation*, which would be more satisfactory and easier to handle and would render the use of card indexing unnecessary. With a well-planned filing system, the arrangement of the files in numerical order would automatically bring a logical sequence of related subject matter, as illustrated below. Each section would be capable of sub-division indefinitely by the aid of decimals, and whilst always complete, could be continually extended.

## Use of Box Files

It is suggested first of all that five to ten new or secondhand box files be procured (a couple of them might have an alphabetical index with advantage), and 5 to 10 manilla folders inserted in each box, with an appropriate number of paper folders inside each.

The boxes should be numbered somewhat as follows:—10, 20, 30 and so on, and the manilla folders from 10 to 19 in the first box, from 20 to 29

in the second and so on. The classified result would then work out something like this:—

10. CORRESPONDENCE FILE.
11. Labour Party
12. Trades Unions
13. General & Miscellaneous
- 13.1 " (keep till 1950)
- 13.2 " (keep till 1952)
40. OFFICIAL AND LEGAL FILE
41. Letters from Head Office on legal points.
- 41.1 Sweepstakes, Draws
- 41.2 Libel and slander
42. Letters from Head Office on Election Procedure.
- 42.1 Nomination
- 42.2 Casual Vacancies
- 42.3 Election expenses—joint candidatures
- 42.4 Retirals of Councillors
43. Letters from Head Office (CIPPA)
- 43.1 Undue influence
- 43.2 Bribery and treating

Other boxes could, for example, contain classified documents from the Town Clerk, Local Authority, Labour Group, (Deeds, Agreements, Contracts) Reports and Minutes, Head Office and Local Party circulars and leaflets, and opponents literature, press cuttings, etc. Invoices and receipts could be filed alphabetically.

## List of Contents

A brief classified list of contents of each box should be pasted on the inside of the front lid, and an indication of contents on outside front of box for quick lifting from its shelf. Also in turn each manilla folder should carry in front its list of contents.

Oral bargains and agreements are liable to be misunderstood and may lead to litigation, and therefore all such contracts, however small, should be committed to writing, accurately and clearly and duly signed and witnessed, so as to leave no room for dispute and the documents so arranged and safely kept so that they can be found without any delay when required.

When filing large-sized reports, etc., it is wise to fold the papers so that the subject-matter is on the outside,



as this saves valuable time when looking for the particular document.

When using loose-leaf binders, number the sheets or documents "backwards." This does away with thumbing down many sheets to get to current and most recent material.

If possible, it is best to fix all letters and documents together with tags so as to save anything from being lost, and to keep the letters in order and for easier insertions.

It is a good plan to cut extracts from Minutes and Reports and place them in the files at the appropriate place, to ensure a complete history of the particular case.

#### **Turning out old material**

Disposal of old material is a knotty

problem, and letters and documents of permanent and historical value should be carefully transferred to a special file, and those of temporary interest destroyed after a given length of time. When the whole of a file cannot be destroyed, it is wise to preserve the vital portion, e.g. in the case of a dispute settled by an official from Transport House, the "findings" should be kept, and a précis of important details.

*One final word—never look upon the proper and regular filing of documents as a bore to be avoided and indefinitely delayed or you will surely regret it. Order is infinitely preferable to chaos in any walk of life and particularly for a secretary. A job worth doing is always worth doing well.*

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## **READERS' FORUM**

### **"Can Any Ward Beat This?"**

In reply to the question you ask under the above heading on page 12 of the July issue, I claim that the efforts achieved by the North Hainault Ward of Ilford knock to a frazzle those of the Sanderstead Ward in South Croydon outlined in your paragraph.

Whereas Sanderstead have enrolled 250 members in two years, we in the North Hainault Ward of Ilford have enrolled 254 in four and a half months, from mid-January to May of this year, and all but six of these are still paying regularly each month.

Just how we did it was explained in the June issue of the "Labour Organiser"; 142 of the 254 were enrolled by our Ward Chairman, the other 112 being divided among four other persons.

Don't be downhearted, Croydon, let's hope that your efforts, already beaten by ours, will soon be beaten by many others throughout the country! The Party can do with all the new members it can get.—Yours,

C. F. GREEN, Chairman,  
North Hainault Ward,  
North Ilford D.L.P.

---

We, in Plashet Ward of the above Party, claim an even better result than that quoted in your last month's para-

graph under the heading, "Can Any Ward Beat This?"

At the beginning of 1947 the Ward was in a depleted state, mainly due to the blitz, the changing population, and the fact that many of the pre-war workers had gone.

A number of new officers were elected at the A.G.M. and we proceeded to put our house in order and by personal contact among friends and so on we raised our membership from 105 to 186 by the end of the year. We determined this year to have an all-out membership campaign. Those members willing to help met and agreed upon details. We wrote labels election fashion and distributed literature and followed up with a house-to-house canvass once a week with a follow-up on the "outs" on Sunday morning.

So far we have raised our membership to 574, to which figure can be added 16 members to whom we issued cards, but who have since moved, which makes a net gain of 404. We intend to continue until at least the end of August and we expect a membership by then of 750. Can any Ward beat this?

G. W. GREEN,  
Secretary, Plashet Ward,  
East Ham North L.P.

# Storming the Tory Villages

By Mrs. BEARDSLEY

*Here is an account of the grand recruiting work being done by one Women's Section in villages which have been previously regarded as Conservative strongholds.*

Nearly three years ago 11 women got together in Edwinstowe and formed the first Women's Section in a colliery-owned village in the Newark division. We went out to the three neighbouring colliery-owned villages, where, to put it mildly, political activities had been discouraged.

We helped them to form sections, and Mrs. Kay, our Organiser, came and helped us with our teething troubles. I only wish it were possible to take some of the critics of Women's Sections to one of Mrs. Kay's schools so that they could see the unbelievable progress that raw students can make in a week under her guidance and encouragement.

## Propaganda By Bus

Our next step was to form a Federation of our four sections and the Newark section. We had been shocked when canvassing in a rural county council by-election at the appalling ignorance and lack of political knowledge, and people told us that the Labour Party only bothered about them at elections. We, therefore, decided that the Federation would spend the first Monday of every month on Propaganda Tours. We hire a bus each time, at a cost of between £3 and £4 and the expense is stood by each Section in turn. In this way any member can come and help and does not have to think whether she can afford her fare.

*In less than three years our women members have increased from 11 to over 80. We raise and use roughly £80 a year, and it may be of interest to readers to see an extract from our last years' accounts; £7 Laski Appeal; £5 Morgan Phillips' Education Fund; £5 to the Divisional Party; £5 Maxton Memorial Fund; £5 Advisory Council (raised from a tea); £5 Beatrice Webb Memorial Home; £6 10s. Conference delegate; £12 for two scholarships to National Summer Schools; £5 Old Age Pensioners New Year Party. Since then we have contributed £5 to the Brigg by-election and various oddments and paid £3 5s. for a bus for one of our propaganda tours.*

Our first objective was the village of Collingham, which is the most Tory spot in the division, and where the Agent and divisional party members had been trying to form a Party for 25 years. We took with us the Rural Housing pamphlet and 50 Things Labour Has Done. If we found a Labour supporter who only needed encouragement, we talked about the value of having a Labour Party in the village and what could be achieved by unity. If the person agreed we then gave them a membership form and asked for it to be filled in. We left with 17 signed forms and now Collingham has a Labour Party.

## Courage to the Faint-Hearted

The next hardest nut was Southwell. We left with 60 completed membership forms. Five of us called personally on 12 of these in case they became faint-hearted wondering what would happen when the Lord of the Manor knew they had joined the Labour Party. We have arranged a meeting for them with a Labour M.P.—our own is a Tory, but we hope the work we are doing will get him out as we only lost by 1,000 votes last time.

On our third tour we went to Sutton-on-Trent and returned with 55 filled in membership forms.

*We intend to continue this method until every village has a Labour Party strong enough to carry on, and a Women's Section as well.*

I would like to end by appealing to readers to try and do some of this old type of propaganda which has helped to build our great Movement into what it is to-day. This is our job, not Transport House's, and as true Socialists and worthy sons and daughters of the grand old pioneers, we know that this work is still badly needed. Our boast of equal opportunity is carried out to the remotest hamlet. We cannot rely solely on making fine speeches on rostrums. That won't get new members.

*It is a grand job telling people that the interest of the Labour Party is always with them and not only at election times.*



## Fifty Members in One Hour

By SAM HASSALL, Secretary, Milton Labour Party

"Like a sheep led to the slaughter," I was persuaded to become Secretary of the village Labour Party. As yet, I am in the first year of my membership of the Labour Party, having been "roped" in to the party by one of our local stalwarts, who along with a few others had kept the organisation "just ticking over" during the war.

The village of Milton is situated on the border of the City of Stoke-on-Trent and the County Division of Leek. With the redistribution of seats we shall leave the Leek Division to become part and parcel of the Stoke-on-Trent Central Division at present known as Hanley and represented by Dr. B. Stross, M.P.

Our membership in the early period of the year was about 35 members, and I suggested to the Chairman of the Party that it was not good enough for our little village. My Chairman and his wife, (who by the way are prominent Co-operative Party workers), proved a source of help to me, suggesting that we should organise a door to door canvass of the village, doing one section at a time. This idea was put down on the agenda for the next meeting and the idea was supported with enthusiasm.

### Letter to Each Family

The important task was in making the necessary preliminaries. I got in touch with Bill Rowe our Leek Divisional Agent, and he supplied me with a supply of application forms suitable for the purpose. My Chairman drafted and duplicated a circular, addressing each family as "Dear Friends," and signed by myself as the Secretary of the Local Labour Party.

This letter was couched in intimate terms and pointed out what the Labour Government had achieved. It told everyone plainly what the contribution was; asked for their consideration of the matter; specified when we should call on them; and asked them, if they were out, to bring the completed application form to the person

named as the Street Leader. Everything was explicit in the duplicated letter, whereas the Head Office leaflets did the rest.

We had arranged to concentrate our efforts on one Section of the village which would take up about one hour of doorstep work. The leaflets were folded neatly and "tucked in" and delivered the night before we set out to collect the completed application forms. We chose Friday for the collection, so that we might catch a majority at home. In view of the redistribution impending, we thought that this was the right time to invite the Member for the new Division to speak. So Dr. B. Stross, M.P., agreed to speak to the people, with the aid of loud speaker equipment, while we called at the houses for the completed forms.

*Our workers enjoyed the friendship and exhilaration derived from the task in hand. The people were very friendly and were glad to see us. When we counted up, we found that we had made almost a member per minute, for we had enrolled 50 members in less than an hour.*

So we are looking forward to our next organised membership drive.

### What's Happening in Kent

An intensive programme for the coming year is detailed by the Kent Federation of Constituency Labour Parties in its "Handbook 1948-49," including plans for a series of six one-day schools, a week-end school, a summer campaign of mass open-air meetings throughout the county and a special elections service for the 1949 County Council Elections. There is also a detailed report of the work of the Kent County Council Labour Party in the various aspects of local government where the progressive policies consistently urged by Labour members have met with considerable success.

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# Plan Your Ward Meeting

By F. W. MORRIS, Secretary-Agent, Romford L.P.

THE Labour Party believes in planning, and planning has a local as well as a national significance. Do you plan your Ward Party meetings? Here are some notes to guide Chairmen and Secretaries in arranging and conducting their business meetings.

It is desirable to hold the Executive meeting as near to the date of the Ward meeting, as is consistent with giving a fair opportunity to the Secretary to minute and clear Executive business before the Ward meeting. As a result the E.C. will have dealt with most of the business to come before the meeting and their advice will be invaluable to the general members.

Get your members to sign the attendance register as they enter the meeting. The practice of having two members of the Executive to extend a handshake and welcome to the meeting is one that can be highly commended. Members do like to feel that someone has taken notice of them.

## Form of Agenda

Here is a form of agenda which will be found to cover all general purposes: (1) Minutes of previous meeting. (2) Matters arising from Minutes. (3) Correspondence. (4) Financial Statement. (5) Executive Committee Report. (6) Special Business and Notices of

Motion. (7) Delegates Reports. (8) Other Business.

Correspondence dealt with by the E.C. will come up under the agenda item "E.C. Report." Correspondence to hand since the E.C. meeting, if rather involved and not of an urgent nature, should be held over for consideration and report by the next E.C. Correspondence received since the E.C. meeting and which has a bearing on matters to be dealt with in the E.C. Report, should be taken in conjunction with the E.C. Report.

On the Financial Statement the Treasurer should give total income for month, total expenditure for month and then, balance in hand. Then should follow some details as to how the income and expenditure is made up. Clarity should be the essence of this Report.

## Stick To Salient Points

Your Executive Committee Report should be compiled in the form of extracts from the E.C. Minutes. E.C. decisions only should be given. Minority opinions, movers and seconders of motions at the E.C. should be excluded. Correspondence dealt with by the E.C. should be reported upon, giving a synopsis of each item. The preamble of letters and "Dear Comrade" and "Yours fraternally," etc., are all superfluous reading when time is the all-important factor.

When preparing your agenda and papers for the meeting, read through and underline the salient points of letters. This will enable you to give more easily their general significance. Having given the meeting the synopsis, then give the E.C. recommendation thereon. It assists the members if the E.C. Report is taken item by item and a decision taken on each item as it arises.

Include in your E.C. Report a synopsis of the Organising, Press and Propaganda, Social and Literature Sub-Committee Reports as given to the E.C. It will be for the various sub-Secretaries, if they so desire, to elaborate on their own particular sub-committee affairs. The Chairman must deal firmly with members who wish to go into lengthy discussion on details. Members should learn to leave the details to the experts—the sub-committees—that is their job.

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Special Business as its name implies, is "extraordinary" business, appointment to fill a vacancy on the G.M.C., officership of the Ward, etc. With regard to notices of motion, due notice as per your standing orders will be of such a length of time as to ensure that they are received in time for your E.C. meeting and that your E.C. submits its recommendation thereon to the members. Notices of motion where due notice has NOT been given, that is to say, on matters of urgency only, these should be discussed only by a majority decision of the meeting.

### No "Free For All"

Other business should not be a "free for all." The Chairman will come down firmly on members who seek to use "our old friend" any other business, for the purpose of putting important and contentious business and getting a snap decision thereon. Such a procedure is a negation of orderly business and must be frowned upon.

If you are having a speaker along to address your meeting, see that he is given ample time to put over his subject. Plan your agenda to a timetable so as to ensure this. And just by the way, see that a glass of water is available at the table in case the speaker should require it.

The Chairman and Secretary keen to make their meetings go with a swing, will meet prior to the meeting and form in their minds eye a picture of how the meeting will run. Aim by stressing important points and clamping down on trifles to give the members something interesting right throughout the meeting. A member who has been bored will not come to a meeting again. We should remember that the future of our Movement must depend upon a keen and intelligent membership. The basis of our membership lies within the Ward Parties. It is for us to see that the instrument for their expression of opinion works smoothly and well.

## DEADLINE

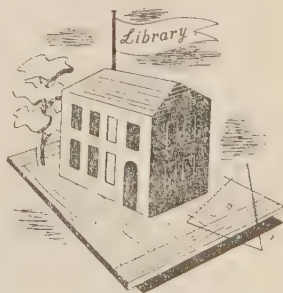
*Don't forget the deadline for the receipt of all contributions — the 15th of the month for publication the following month.*

*That applies to advertisements as well as articles. Send them all to The Editor, Labour Organiser, Transport House, Smith Square, S.W.1.*

*Let's hear what your Party is doing!*

## Public Libraries PUBLICITY

The emphasis is not casual. If you are active in municipal affairs, especially if you serve on the Libraries' Committee, you know how often the Library is the focal point for local information. From the Libraries Dept. issues much information as well as books. Where the service embraces discussion and music groups, exhibitions, civic weeks organisation, it may be useful to you to know that CAS—the publicity organisation-with-the-social-purpose—specialises in the production of all kinds of publicity material for such events. May we help with YOUR next municipal venture?



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CAS

# Soldiers of Lead

By MICHAEL MIDDLETON, Labour Party's Art Editor

*The Labour Party's new publicity handbook has set the standard. It is now for Local Parties to start that sound training in modern publicity techniques.*

The Labour Party has made history yet again. A few weeks ago it published an authoritative introduction to printing techniques, entitled SOLDIERS OF LEAD, with the object of modernising party publicity the length and breadth of the country. No other political party in the world has produced such a booklet before. Overworked organisers and secretaries may think this is a small thing to make a song and dance about. The national press did not.

## What the National Press Said

Viscount Kemsley, writing in the *Sunday Times*, referred to this "lavishly produced booklet," and said, "Both centrally and in the constituencies the Conservatives, if they desire to succeed, must match this propaganda." The *Daily Worker*, at the other extreme, called it a "lavishly-produced, first-class handbook . . . that active political workers dealing with all forms of printed publicity will find invaluable," and went on to say, "One up, in fact, to Transport House."

The *Daily Mirror*, devoting some nine inches of its valuable column-space to SOLDIERS OF LEAD, said the booklet "tells in simple language and with forceful illustrations and diagrams just how election addresses should be written, how they should be printed and how they should be displayed. Posters, handbills, leaflets, pamphlets, brochures—the right way to handle them all is set out in the book."

*World's Press News*, the professional press and publicity journal, spoke of "treatises of technical excellence," and went on to say "the modest selling price is far below its intrinsic worth to any printer, journalist or advertising man." Tom Driberg, writing in *Reynolds*, summed it all up by saying, "Local Parties had better get this book quickly — before the Tories and Liberals buy up the whole issue!"

Well, thank you, one and all. Pats on the back are always encouraging. In all this praise, however, there lurks a danger, and that is that the reader may expect too much of SOLDIERS OF LEAD.

As Morgan Phillips said in the circular that announced the booklet:

SOLDIERS OF LEAD is not a sort of conjuring trick that will work miracles for you. It can only show you how to train yourself to tackle each job as it comes along! That is the crux of this whole matter of publicity. There is no easy, ready-made system for pressing a button and producing a good poster, or election address, or what-have-you.

*It is a technical problem that can only be solved successfully by training and experience. What we have to see is that each and every Local Party has at least one member who can devote all his or her energies to the gaining of that training and experience.*

In periods of crisis or peak political effort—during general elections, for example—Local Parties have to stand on their own feet, so far as their own propaganda is concerned. Time does not permit central help or guidance. If local publicity is to play its part effectively, Parties *must* be able to call upon their own technical advice. A complete revolution in standards has to take place, and it has to take place in a very short time. With the Local Government elections of next spring looming ahead, and the General Election following them a year later, it is vitally important that real training in modern publicity techniques should start now, at once.

## Who Will Do the Job?

The more knowledge the reader acquires, the more useful will SOLDIERS OF LEAD become. If every Local Party ordered just one copy of this booklet; if in every Local Party just one person read that copy and acted upon its advice, then there is no doubt that a general improvement would begin to show itself all over the country — an improvement which should gain momentum with every passing month. As Tom Driberg says, "Our hoardings can be transformed by 1950." But not unless we start *now*. Who will take the job on in *your* Party?

SOLDIERS OF LEAD may be obtained from Labour Publications Department, Transport House, Smith Square, London, S.W.1, at 2s. 6d. (2s. 8d. post free).



# Our Socials Make Money

By H. D. DAVIS, Social Committee Secretary, Smethwick Trades and Labour Council

*Here is how one Local Party overcame its financial problems by setting up a go-ahead social committee to raise funds.*

Early in 1947 the financial position of our local Party gave rise to very real anxieties, and ways and means of improving it had to be very seriously considered. A section of our Executive Committee, mainly our younger and newer members, pressed for the setting up of a separate committee to deal with social functions. Its main purpose was to raise funds, but at the same time keeping an eye open for any opportunities of increasing membership.

This Social Committee began its activities in May, 1947, and quickly realised that its task was not going to be an easy one. The problem of obtaining the use of halls in this Division is a very serious one, as we have no large hall of our own, and almost the whole of the available accommodation is owned either by the Education Committee of the Town Council or various church authorities. The restrictions placed on the use of school halls are such as to make them practically useless to us, and most of the churches have clubs, etc., of their own, which are naturally given precedence over outside bookings.

However, despite these difficulties, the Social Committee managed to hold a number of dances and socials which proved an immediate success, both financially and socially.

## A Week-End Outing

A function which, though not bringing in a large return financially, was an outstanding success for the interest it created in the constituency, was a week-end coach trip to Blackpool held during the beginning of October. Accompanied by our M.P., and the Mayor of Smethwick, some 320 people travelling in ten coaches, had an enjoyable week-end, for which an inclusive charge was made covering fare, tea on the Saturday and bed and breakfast and dinner on the Sunday.

This event was such a success that we decided to repeat it this year, and bookings suggest that an even larger party will enjoy the outing this time.

Our largest fund-raiser, however, proved to be the sweepstakes held on the Derby and Cesarewitch, and the

Christmas draw with five 3d. tickets in a book for one shilling. These are easy and sure winners. Commission is paid to Wards on the quantity they sell and competition becomes keen.

The result of all this effort meant that a sum large enough to pay off the debt of the local Party was handed over to the executive in January this year. Our future funds are to be split between a general fund and a special fund set up for the purpose of employing a full-time agent in the not too distant future.

## This Year's Garden Party

This year's activities, besides following the general lines which proved so successful last year, include a monster garden party, to be held on July 3rd. Affiliated organisations and Ward Committees have been invited to take part both financially and in providing the personnel to staff the various side-shows, baby show, dog show and refreshments. Sports for young and old will also be held, and one of the highlights of the day will be the crowning of the League of Youth Beauty Queen. Our own Member of Parliament and the Member of our neighbouring Division, Stourbridge, have promised to attend, and it is hoped to obtain the services of a stage or film star to perform the opening and crowning ceremonies.

Our main hope is that a generous clerk of the weather will be kind to us and compensate the committee for the hard work and sacrifices made by all the members during the twelve months of its existence.

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KEYWORKERS  
READ THE  
"LABOUR  
ORGANISER"?**

# Hull Election Petition

By JOHN PINKERTON

*Was Mrs. Shepperdson a member of Hull City Council or was she not? Here is a detailed report of how the final verdict was reached.*

THE judgment given in this petition will be of great interest to all agents and members likely to be appointed counting agents in future elections.

The petition arose after several recounts in one of the wards in Hull in the last November elections when the Labour Candidate, Mrs. Shepperdson, was declared elected by a majority of two votes.

The Conservative Candidate, not satisfied with the final count, petitioned the Courts for a scrutiny of the ballot papers, pleading that Mrs. Shepperdson was wrongfully elected, and that he should have been elected.

## High Court Judgment

Scrutiny of the papers was conducted before Mr. Justice Hilberry in the Hull County Court, and 17 ballot papers were adjudged to be in dispute. It was then necessary to take the case to the High Court for judgment on those papers disputed.

It was decided to apply for this to be treated as a "special case" under Sec. 93(7) of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, and permission was granted by Mr. Justice Birkett sitting in Chambers.

This meant that instead of each candidate lodging evidence and examining witnesses, the contentions of each, together with questions on which the opinion of the Court was requested, were presented in one document, and the case was heard in the High Court by Justices Birkett and Slade on the 13th July, 1948.

## Six Disputed Papers

By agreement of the candidates and their legal advisers, the number of papers disputed was reduced to six; two of these contained written names of persons, each of which could be said to be sufficient to identify the voter, two more papers contained initials which similarly could be identity of electors, and two more had imperfect official marks.

Those with the names written on were immediately adjudged to be invalid votes, and not to be counted, not only because being just surnames, the names might be the same as persons on the register and therefore could have been those persons, but also because the person might be identified by the writing.

The two with initials were also adjudged invalid for the same reason, although counsel for the petitioner had argued that the initials on one were so indefinite that such a person having made them would be difficult to trace.

## Imperfect Official Mark

The two containing the imperfect official mark were the real ones at issue, and much argument took place. The official mark in this instance was ten perforations in a pattern like HK combined. On one of the papers only one perforation and two small embosses of holes appeared, and this paper had been rejected at the Court on the grounds that it did not contain the official mark.

On the other paper the complete pattern was embossed, but the machine had not perforated the paper, and Counsel for the Conservative candidate claimed that this should not be counted on similar grounds to the above.

*In giving judgment Mr. Justice Birkett said that both these two papers should be counted because it was*

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evident that the intention of the person stamping the paper had been to put on the whole official mark. They, the Judges, felt that in cases of this kind special consideration should be given to the voter who might be disfranchised by some slight act or fault of the user of the machine or some imperfection or fault of the machine for making the perforation.

Such a contingency should not count against the voter, who otherwise had made clear his intention as to who he wished to vote for, and there was evidence of an attempt to put on the paper the official mark.

### Final Verdict

Of the papers in dispute some were for Mrs. Shepperdson and some for the Conservative Candidate, but after

totalling those that were rejected and those allowed by the Judges, the final result left Mrs. Shepperdson with the same majority of 2, and judgment with costs were given in her favour.

There was another paper in dispute which had not been included in the original case, and Counsel for the petitioner asked for it to be included, as its inclusion could not affect the result, his request was refused.

The Petitioner also asked for leave to appeal against the judgment but this was not granted.

In order to take the case to the High Court, the Petitioner had to deposit a sum of £300 as security against costs, there will be little of this sum left when the costs of both sides, plus stamp fees and other allowable charges have been taken out.

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## ON THE RECORDS

*(Continued from page 6)*

index cards can be purchased. Ask for Cavedex Junior No. 457291.

*Here you have something that can be fitted in the attaché case and carried to the Ward meeting with you, always handy, always ready for use. After the initial outlay the cost to maintain is almost nil, but you have the system you have been waiting for.*

It is also the property of the Party and can be handed over to the incoming Secretary. Knowing the difficulties of having every available cupboard at home full of Party material, this will cut out wasted room by the box index card single system.

### For Party Secretaries

This can be further used as an index for Party Secretaries. I use this method for records of the General Council, the Executive Committee, affiliated organisations, Finance Committee and other sub-committees, all to hand and easy for reference. You can easily arrange the cards so that if you have changes to make you can take out a card and replace it quickly.

Dealing with a 3,000 membership I find the single card index system the best for the office, where it can remain, and extra items can always be added. The Cavedex Junior is not for this purpose but a simple way for home use, and will prevent cards being mislaid. As you will see from the diagram, its usefulness is in its simplicity and ease of handiness.

---

## CHILDREN IN SLAVERY

A moving little booklet on "The Industrial Revolution and Child Slavery" has been written by Ald. Arthur Gardiner, J.P., Secretary-agent for Huddersfield. It tells of the great struggles of the past against the inhumanity and cruelty of the Industrial Revolution when children, some of them no more than five years of age, worked sixteen and eighteen hours a day in the mills, beaten and starved, maimed and deformed, in this "hell of human cruelty." Here is the whole story of the fight of the humanitarians of the first half of the last century to secure the Ten Hours Act for women and children, and the tremendous work of such men as Lord Shaftesbury, Michael Tom Sadler and Richard Oastler, who devoted the best part of their lives to this mission. This was only a hundred years ago but it was, indeed, these early struggles which paved the way to what would then have seemed our near-perfect society of to-day.

"Industrial Revolution and Child Slavery" is obtainable from Ald. Arthur Gardiner, J.P., 2, Station Street, Huddersfield, price 1s.

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